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Department of State

TELEGRAM

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ORIGIN NEA-07

INFO OCT-00 AF-10 EUR-12 EA-12 IO-15 SSM-05 ADS-00
H-02 PA-02 SIG-03 PCN-04 INR-10 INR2-00 NSAE-00
SS-15 SP-08 PM-05 SMS-01 L-03 SSM-02 SPH-01
SES-01 ACDA-12 7124 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P. JRYAN
APPROVED BY NEA/P. G. SHERMAN
PA/PRS - MR. CARTER
H - MR. BURLEIGH
SSM - MR. TRINKA
NEA/IAI - MR. KORN
NEA/ARN - MR. HOWELL
NEA/EGY - MR. MARTENSEN
NEA/ARP - MR. COUNTRYMAN
NEA/IRN - MR. PRECHT

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL BOMBAY IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY Dacca IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL KARACHI IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL MADRAS IMMEDIATE
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED by G.F. B... DATE 8/31/80
☒ RELEASE ☐ EXCISE ☐ DECLASSIFY
☐ DECLASSIFY in PART
☐ Non-responsive info.
FCL EO or PA exemptions
☐ CLASSIFY as _____ TS authority to:
☐ DOWNGRADE TS to () S or () C, OADR

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AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

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AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
AMEMBASSY DOHA
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY SANA
USMISSION SINAI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION USNATO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
CIA WASHDC 0000
SECDEF WASHDC 0000
JCS WASHDC 0000
NSC WASHDC 0000
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
USICA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS POUCH
USINT BAGHDAD POUCH

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD, TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 12065: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - FEBRUARY 14

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EX-

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EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR FEBRUARY 14, 1980. SPOKESMAN TODAY WAS HODDING CARTER.

Q. HAVE YOU HEARD ANYTHING MORE DIRECT FROM THE SOVIET UNION ABOUT THE WITHDRAWAL OF ANY FORCES FROM AFGHANISTAN?

A. THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT WE CAN SEE, AND CERTAINLY ON THE BASIS OF THE TALKS THAT FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO HAD FROM THE PUBLIC RECORD OF THOSE TALKS WITH MRS. GANDHI, THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE MUCH LIKELIHOOD OF ANY WITHDRAWAL IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE...

Q. THERE IS A REPORT TODAY THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL HAS ALLOCATED SOME MONEY TO PURCHASE LAND ON THE WEST BANK FOR THE PURPOSE OF BUILDING MORE SETTLEMENTS: THAT COMING ON TOP OF THE HEBRON STATEMENT OF YOURS TWO DAYS AGO CALLING SUCH ACTS AS "BACKWARDS", "STEPS BACKWARDS", HOW WOULD YOU RESPOND TO THAT NOW?

A. I WENT OVER THE WHOLE QUESTION ON TUESDAY BASICALLY, BUT WHAT I HAD TO SAY ABOUT OUR CONCERN OVER THE SETTLEMENT POLICY APPLIES JUST AS STRONGLY TODAY. OBVIOUSLY, WE WERE AGAINST ANY STEPS IN THE KNESSET WHICH ARE CALCULATED TO SUPPORT THAT SETTLEMENTS POLICY.

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THE POSITION ON THAT IS FIRM. SUCH ACTIVITY IS CONTRARY TO INTERNATIONAL LAW, PREJUDGES THE OUTCOME OF THE NEGOTIATIONS AND IS AN OBSTACLE TO THE PEACE PROCESS.

THIS IS YET ANOTHER INDICATION OF THAT.

Q. ABOUT THE SETTLEMENTS, COULD YOU CONFIRM THE REPORT THAT CAME FROM ISRAEL THAT SECRETARY VANCE SENT A MESSAGE YESTERDAY TO PRIME MINISTER BEGIN CONCERNING THE HEBRON DECISION.

A. NO, I WON'T CONFIRM SPECIFIC KINDS OF COMMUNICATION. WHAT I SAID YESTERDAY STANDS AND COULD BE TAKEN INDIRECTLY, AT LEAST, THAT WE HAVE BEEN IN COMMUNICATION AT A LEVEL OF SUFFICIENT HEIGHT THAT -- YOU KNOW, "AT A HIGH LEVEL."

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT TODAY ON THE SITUATION IN
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LEBANON.

A. YES. I HAVE THIS -- LET ME SUGGEST THAT THIS HAS BEEN PROVIDED, BECAUSE IT WILL BE SORT OF A WORKING GUIDANCE -- NOT JUST FOR SPECIFIC EVENTS NOW BUT FOR WHAT APPARENTLY HAS BEEN, AND ARE GOING TO BE, A CONSTANT STREAM OF REPORTS AND RUMORS OUT OF LEBANON TO WHICH I'M NOT GOING TO HAVE A SPECIFIC RESPONSE BECAUSE THERE ARE SO MANY OF THEM.

IN THIS GENERAL VEIN THOUGH, WE SHARE THE CONCERN OF A MAJORITY OF THE LEBANESE PEOPLE AND THEIR FRIENDS AT THE RISE OF TENSIONS OVER RECENT WEEKS.

ONE OF THE MOST DANGEROUS AND DISTURBING DEVELOPMENTS HAS BEEN AN ESCALATION OF FIGHTING AND ARTILLERY EXCHANGES IN SOUTHERN LEBANON WITH THE PREDICTABLE HUMAN TRAGEDIES
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IN TERMS OF CIVILIAN DEATHS AND DISPLACEMENTS ON BOTH SIDES.

WE DEPLORE THESE IRRESPONSIBLE ACTIONS AND THE INHUMANITY OF THOSE WHO INITIATE OR PERPETUATE THEM. THEY MUST STOP. AND WE ARE IN TOUCH WITH THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT AND OTHER GOVERNMENTS WHO HAVE INFLUENCE UPON THE SITUATION TO DO ALL THAT WE CAN TO BRING THIS SPIRAL TO A RAPID END.

BUT AS YOU ARE AWARE, THERE ARE INCREASED TENSIONS IN OTHER SECTIONS OF LEBANON AS WELL.

UNDER SUCH CONDITIONS, WE HAVE BECOME ALL TOO ACCUSTOMED TO SEEING VARIOUS IRRESPONSIBLE FACTIONS AND ARMED ELEMENTS BEHAVE IN A MANNER THAT UNDERMINES LEBANESE SECURITY AND THE EFFORTS OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON TO DISCHARGE ITS RESPONSIBILITIES.

IN THAT VEIN, THE WELL-PUBLICIZED KIDNAPPING OF A PROMINENT LEBANESE POLITICAL FIGURE IS ONLY THE MOST RECENT IN A LONG ACT OF DEPLORABLE ACTS. WE HAVE SEEN NO CONVINCING EVIDENCE AS TO RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS ACT, AND WE HOPE THAT THIS VICTIM WILL BE RELEASED SAFELY.

LIKewise, THE CLASH YESTERDAY AT THE BARRACKS IN THE BEIRUT SUBURBS AND THE CONTINUING CLASHES BETWEEN MARONITE FACTIONS IN THE REGION NORTH OF THE CAPITAL ILLUSTRATE

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GRAPHICALLY THE URGENT NECESSITY FOR ALL GROUPS TO LEND THEIR SUPPORT NOT TO PERSONAL AMBITIONS BUT TO THE PUBLIC GOOD.

THE STRONG SUPPORT WHICH WE HAVE INDICATED A NUMBER OF TIMES TO THE GOVERNMENT OF PRESIDENT SARKIS, PRIME MINISTER HUSS, IS ONE I RESTATE TODAY. WE HAVE THE FIRM CONVICTION THAT ONLY THIS GOVERNMENT, WITH THE SUPPORT OF MOST LEBANESE, CAN END THE TRAGEDY IN LEBANON.

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THE PROBLEM IS THAT, AS THIS GUIDANCE MAKES CLEAR, THERE ARE JUST A SERIES OF EVENTS NOW WHICH ARE CALLING INTO QUESTION THAT COUNTRY'S ABILITY TO DEAL WITH ITS VERY SERIOUS PROBLEMS.

Q. -- DOES THE ADMINISTRATION HAVE A VIEW YET ON WHETHER IT'S A GOOD OR BAD THING THAT THE SYRIANS ARE TALKING ABOUT PULLING OUT TROOPS?

A. THE ONLY VIEW THAT I REALLY HAVE IS THAT IT'S NOT CLEAR WHAT THEY'RE GOING TO DO.

Q. ANY INFORMATION ABOUT THE SOVIETS CONSTRUCTING NEW AIR BASES ON THE PAKISTAN BORDER?

A. NO. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ON THAT.

Q. SCHMIDT IS QUOTED IN A PIECE TODAY AS HAVING DISCLOSED TO A GERMAN NEWSPAPER THAT REQUESTS FOR INTELLIGENCE HAVE PICKED UP CONSTRUCTION OF NEW AIR BASES CAPABLE OF HANDLING SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT.

A. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING FOR YOU ON THAT AT THIS TIME. VANCE

NOTE BY OC/T: POUCHED ALGIERS AND BAGHDAD.

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